

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

1. (Currently Amended) An image forming apparatus for transmitting and receiving data to/from an external apparatus, the image forming apparatus comprising: a communication unit that accesses the external apparatus, and when the external apparatus stores image data addressed to the image forming apparatus, obtains the image data; an image forming unit that performs an image forming operation according to the obtained image data; a power-saving control unit that controls a power-saving mode to be activated or deactivated; and a communication control unit that determines if the power-saving mode is deactivated and controls the communication unit to make an access to the external apparatus while the power-saving mode is deactivated in response to a determination that the power-saving mode is deactivated.

2. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus of claim 1, wherein the access is made when the power-saving mode gets deactivated.

3. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus of claim 1, wherein the access is made when an image forming operation ends.

4. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus of claim 1, wherein the communication control unit further controls the communication unit to

make another access to the external apparatus when a first time period has passed after a last access to the external apparatus.

5. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus of claim 1, further comprising: a prohibition unit that prohibits the communication unit from accessing the external apparatus, until a second time period has passed after a last access to the external apparatus.

6. (Currently Amended) ~~The image forming apparatus of claim 5,~~ An image forming apparatus for transmitting and receiving data to/from an external apparatus, the image forming apparatus comprising: a communication unit that accesses the external apparatus, and when the external apparatus stores image data addressed to the image forming apparatus, obtains the image data; an image forming unit that performs an image forming operation according to the obtained image data; a power-saving control unit that controls a power-saving mode to be activated or deactivated; a communication control unit that controls the communication unit to make an access to the external apparatus while the power-saving mode is deactivated; and a prohibition unit that prohibits the communication unit from accessing the external apparatus, until a second time period has passed after a last access to the external apparatus;

wherein the communication control unit further controls the communication unit to make another access to the external apparatus when a first time period has passed after a last access to the external apparatus; and

wherein the power-saving control unit activates the power-saving mode when no image forming operation is performed for a third time period, and the second time period is shorter than the third time period.

7. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus of claim 6, wherein the external apparatus functions as an electronic mail server, and the image data that the communication unit obtains from the external apparatus is image data attached to electronic mail.

8. (Currently Amended) An image forming system comprising:  
a server for storing image data; and  
an image forming apparatus for transmitting and receiving data to/from the server via a network,  
wherein the server includes:  
a storage unit that stores image data in correspondence with a network address; and  
a transmission unit that, in response to a request by an external terminal, transmits image data that corresponds to a network address of the external terminal,  
and the image forming apparatus includes:  
a request unit that accesses the server and requests, from the server, image data addressed to the image forming apparatus;  
a reception unit that receives the image data transmitted from the server;  
an image forming unit that performs an image forming operation according to the received image data;

a power-saving control unit that controls a power-saving mode to be activated or deactivated; and

a request control unit that determines if the power-saving mode is deactivated and controls the request unit to access the server while the power-saving mode is deactivated in response to a determination that the power-saving mode is deactivated.

9. (Currently Amended) An image forming method executed in an image forming apparatus, the image forming apparatus having a power-saving unit that controls a power-saving mode to be activated or deactivated, and being for transmitting and receiving data to/from an external apparatus, the image forming method comprising:

determining if the power-saving mode is deactivated;

~~an image data obtaining step of~~ in response to a determination that the power-saving mode is deactivated making an access to the external apparatus while the power-saving mode is deactivated, and ~~[[of]]~~, when the external apparatus stores image data addressed to the image forming apparatus, obtaining the image data; and

~~an image forming step of~~ performing an image forming operation according to the obtained image data.

10. (Previously Presented) The image forming method of claim 9, wherein the access is made when the power-saving mode gets deactivated.

11. (Previously Presented) The image forming method of claim 9, wherein the access is made when an image forming operation ends.

12. (Previously Presented) The image forming method of claim 9, wherein in the image-data obtaining step, another access to the external apparatus is performed when a first time period has passed after a last access to the external apparatus.

13. (Previously Presented) The image forming method of claim 9, wherein the image-data obtaining step includes an access prohibition substep of prohibiting an access to the external apparatus, until a second time period has passed after a last access to the external apparatus.

14. (Previously Presented) The image forming method of claim 13, wherein the power-saving control unit activates the power-saving mode when no image forming operation is performed for a third time period, and the second time period is shorter than the third time period.

15. (Previously Presented) The image forming method of claim 9, wherein the external apparatus functions as an electronic mail server, and the image data obtained at the image-data obtaining step from the external apparatus is image data attached to electronic mail.

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable recording medium that stores therein a program executed in an image forming apparatus, the image forming apparatus having a power-saving unit that controls a power-saving mode to be activated or deactivated, and being for transmitting and receiving data to/from an external apparatus, the program making the image forming apparatus perform:

determining if the power-saving mode is deactivated;

in response to a determination that the power-saving mode is deactivated, an  
~~image data obtaining operation of~~ accessing the external apparatus while the power-saving mode is deactivated, and ~~[[of]]~~, when the external apparatus stores image data addressed to the image forming apparatus, obtaining the image data; and

~~an image forming operation of~~ performing an image forming operation according to the obtained image data.